

We have received positive response from the Governments of Israel, France and U.K. We now look forward to increased cooperation from these countries. We also propose to work for early establishment of Joint Working Groups with Israel, France and the United Kingdom.

Incidents of dowry deaths

2530. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a study of married life in urban Indian society carried out recently has revealed that incidents of dowry deaths has risen from around 5000 a year to 6637 last year and the existing laws are not good enough;

(b) whether the malignancy of demanding dowry and maltreating daughters-in-law afflicts Hindu and Sikh lower middle class families and it is much less prevalent among Muslims and almost unknown in Indian Christians; and

(c) if so, what concrete steps Government propose to take in close cooperation with the NGO's, voluntary organisations and philanthropic institutions to eschew dowry deaths?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI):

(a) As per the information received from the National Crime Record Bureau, the number of cases of dowry deaths in the country during the year 1996-1999 as follows:

Year	No. of cases of dowry deaths
1996	5,513
1997	6,006
1998	6,975
1999	6,574

(b) This Ministry does not maintain this information on the basis of communities.

(c) As per the information received from Department of Women & Child Development, that Department is implementing various information and mass education programmes lined with advocacy and legal literacy to generating public awareness about various issue concerning women and children including the evils of dowry. The Department is also implementing a scheme of Education Work for Prevention of Atrocities on Women under which academic institutions, NGOs etc. are given aid to conduct legal literacy camps and para legal workers training. Under the scheme, financial assistance is provided to voluntary organizations working for the upliftment and betterment of women and for the prevention of atrocities against women, for items such as propaganda, publicity and research work. The Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) is implementing a programme titled 'Awareness Generation Programme' to create awareness among rural and poor women on various social issues so that they can realise their potential in the family and society. Under this scheme, NGOs are provided grants to hold awareness camps for women. The local Panchayats are also involved in conducting the camps.

The Department of Women & Child Development has brought out a legal literacy manual covering a wide range of subjects on laws relating to women with the aim of educating them about the laws concerning their basic rights.

The Government has also set up a statutory body called National Commission for Women (NCW) with a specific mandate to study and monitor all matters relating to the constitutional and legal safeguards provided to women; review the existing legislations to suggest amendments wherever necessary and to look into complaints "involving deprivation of the rights of women. NCW is receiving complaints relating to dowry/atrocities cases, dowry related suicides⁷ deaths/fouderers. These cases are duly processed in the Commission under NCW Act, 1990 and referred to the appropriate authorities recommending action under the criminal laws wherever necessary.

The Commission also sponsors awareness programmes including legal literacy programmes, which include awareness on the issue of dowry,

Since denial of the share of family property to the girls is one of the causes for the demand for dowry, the Department of Women and Child Development has written to all State Governments/UT Administrations requesting them, inter alia, to amend Section 6 of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, with a view to render coparcenary rights in a coparcenary property for the daughter of a coparcener in a Joint Hindu Family governed by Mitakshara Laws on par with their male counterparts. This would raise the status of girls and women in society and help in preventing the social evil of dowry. The State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra have amended Section 6 of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956 to give women rights over family property.

Central assistance to MP for modernisation of Police force

† 2531. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government propose to make three times Increase in Central assistance for modernising the Police Force of Madhya Pradesh, the largest State of India; and

(b) if so, by when appropriate action is likely to be initiated in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) and (b) The annual allocation to the Government of Madhya Pradesh under the Non-plan Scheme for Modernisation of State Police Forces, has been increased from Rs. 237.82 lakhs in 1993-99 to Rs. 792.72 lakhs during the current financial year 2000-2001. Out of the annual allocation of Rs. 792.72 lakhs for the current financial year, 2000-2001, the first instalment of

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.